

A
 Modest Examination
 OF THE
 RESOLUTION
 OF THIS
 C A S E
 O F
 CONSCIENCE,
 WHETHER

The Church of *England's* Symbolizing in some things,
 so far as it doth with the (confessedly Idolatrous)
 Church of *Rome*, makes it unlawful to hold Commu-
 nion with the Church of *England*, in those things
 which are not by the Divine Law necessary, and by
 those Churches used.

In a Letter to a Friend.

L O N D O N.

Printed for *Thomas Parkhurst*, at the Three Crowns and
Bible, at the lower End of *Cheapside*. 1683.

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OF THE
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that Churches are.

In London, Printed by J. Smith, at the Sign of the Sun in St. Dunstons Church, in the Strand, 1683.

LONDON.

Printed for Thomas Parkinson, at the Three Kings Arms in the lower End of Chancery Lane.



TO HIS
Honoured Friend B. A. Esq; &c.

SIR,

I Have received yours with what attended it, which was exceeding acceptable to me, not only as sent by you, but upon the *Reputation* you give it, as wrote by a Person of *Learning*, and *Temper*, which two things concurring, make any Book acceptable to him, who pretends to any thing of an *intelligent* and *ingenious* Soul. And indeed I find the Book answering your *Recommendation*, and the *Character* I have always received of that *excellent Person*, who is its reputed Father, and whether he be or no, is no great matter, after I have told you that I like the complexion of it.

The worthy Author seemeth to argue thus, *That if our Church Symbolizeth at all with the Church of Rome, it must be in her Doctrine, Worship, or Discipline*, which Three things being all that are *locked up* in that *Ark*, cannot possibly be denied. As to the latter, (arguing chiefly for a Communion in Worship) he was not concerned to speak very much, nor indeed, as to the

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First, and that not for that reason only, but also because I never met with the *Doctrinal part* of the 39. *Articles* charged as *Popish*, nor our *Church* reflected on, as *Symbolizing* with that Idolatrous Church in points of Doctrine.

Hovvever, I cannot but be pleased to hear my *Mother* well spoken of, though to me she needed no such Commendation, being capable of no higher room in my thoughts, than indeed she hath upon that account.

P. 2.

It is mightily satisfactory to me, to hear so excellent a Person assuring us; That our Church alloweth her Members the *judgment of discretion*: If she did not, it would be a mighty prejudice against her in my thoughts. For upon this Rock; *That every private Christian is to prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good* is the *Protestant Church* builded. But this I cannot but think implieth a liberty not on'y to *Believe and Judge*, but to *do also* according to what a man *believes and judgeth*. For otherwise he cannot *hold fast that which is good*, with security to his Fingers, which must be continually rapped by his *Conscience*.

P. 3.

He speaketh very true as to the *Popish Rites and Ceremonies*, P. 3. and that those in our Church are comparatively few: But whether the use of those few was long before *Popery* appeared in the World, I much doubt, unless he means *Popery* at its full growth; for that *Mystery of Iniquity* as to *Rituals*, began to work very early. And we must revive an Hundred more than we have, if we must take all for approveable *Rites*, which (so far as by Books we can understand) were used in some part or other of the Church within *Five hundred years* after Christ, when the first of *Popish Doctrines* had their Birth, (saith our famous *Jewel*.)

I cannot well understand how our excellent Author, P. 4.
saith that our Church doth not impose her Rites as necessary, unless he means as necessary in order to Salvation; for they are certainly imposed as necessary to Communion, without which no Minister much Preach, no Child must be Baptized, no Person must receive the Lords Supper: Nor do I well understand how they are not made necessary to Salvation: When the Non-observance of them is made sinful, and meritorious of a being cast out of the Church, and cut off from the Body of Christ. To say they are not made necessary because they are determined variable; is only to say: To the Superiours they are not necessary, either to Communion, or to Eternal Salvation: But to the Inferiours, they are in practice made necessary in both these senses.

For what this excellent Person saith concerning Purgatory, Auricular Confession, and the Dependency of the Efficacy of the Sacraments on the Priests intention. The Worthy Author saith well, if he means the 39. Articles own none of them. And there is an Author who hath come something nigh the last, proving, That Presbyters can have no power to Ordain, because the Bishops that Ordained them, never intended to confer any such power upon them. P. 5.

The Worthy Author speaketh very much, and very truly to the honour of our Church, that she in 39. Articles, neither alloweth Image Worship, nor Invocation of Saints, nor Pardons, nor Transubstantiation, nor the restraint of the reading the Scripture from the Vulgar; nor alloweth Praying or Administring the Sacraments in an unknown Tongue, nor robbing the Laity of the Cup, nor the Doctrine of Super-erogation; nor yet alloweth simple Fornication, &c. Nor did I ever hear the 39. Articles charged with any such thing. He might have added much P. 6, 7, 8, 9.

much more. Our Church in her *Articles* maintaineth. Art. 6. *The sufficiency of the Scriptures in all things necessary to Salvation* (which the *Papists* impudently deny) Art. 9. She maintains the *Universal Guilt of Original Sin*, the *sinfulness of Concupiscence and Lust*, contrary to the *Popish Decree in the Council of Trent*. Art. 10. *The impotency of Man's Will to any thing truly and spiritually good*. She maintaineth, Art. 11. That we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ by Faith, not for our own Works; and that it is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of comfort that we are Justified by Faith Onely, contrary to the *Popish Doctrine*, which accurseth those that so hold; Art. 12. That good works are the fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification. — That they spring necessarily out of true and lively Faith, contrary to the *Popish Doctrine* in this point. Art. 13. She teacheth, That works done before the Grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his Holy Spirit are not pleasant to God; forasmuch as they spring not out of Faith, &c. Yea, That they have the Nature of Sin, Art. 17. She saith, *Predestination to Life* is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby before the foundations of the World were laid, he hath constantly Decreed by his Counsel (secret to us) to deliver from Curse and Damnation those which he hath chosen in Christ out of Mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting Salvation, as Vessels made to honour, &c. Art. 18. That Holy Scripture doth set out to us only the name of Jesus Christ by which we can be saved. All which Doctrines are as contrary to Popery, as light unto darkness, and in all which I dare say most Dissenters agree; and I am heartily glad, that the consulted brevity of the excellent Author, hath given me leave to add so much in the commendation of the *Articles of the Church of England*.

What the *Worthy Author* further saith of the *Papish* Fooleries, with reference to *Baptism* is both true, and the *Reformation* of the *Church of England* thankfully to God acknowledged, as also in the *Rituals* relating to the other *Sacrament*. And the distance of our Church from that of *Rome* in other things mentioned, p. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. is as freely owned by them all.

P. 10, 11,
12, 13, 14,
15, 16.

But I do not well understand what this *excellent Person* would have us to conclude from hence : Is it that the *Thirty nine Articles* have in them nothing, akin to *Papery* as to matters of Faith ? There is not I dare say, a *Judicious Dissenter* in *England* will say they have. A very *Reverend Author* hath proved their *Creed* the same with that of the *Church of England*, by proving the *Articles* and *Homilies* of our *Church* to speak the same thing that the *Assemblies* lesser *Catechisme* saith. Another Book also wrote by an *Ingenious Author*, and called *Utrum Horum*, hath sufficiently proved both the *Dissenters* Conformity in this thing, to the *Doctrine* of our *Church*, and our *Churches* *Dissonancy* from *Papery*.

Or will this *excellent Person* conclude from hence, that because our *Church* *Symbolizeth* not with that *Church* in *Doctrine* : Therefore she in nothing *Symbolizeth* with that *Synagogue*, or at least in nothing but is so *Venial* as conscientious *Christians* may hold full and perfect *Communion* with her ? Some few things must be spoken in that case.

As in *England* we have a *silent*; and a *speaking Law*; so we also have a *silent*, and a *speaking Church*. The *Statute Books*, and *Books of Cases*, will tell us what the *silent Law of England* is, but up starts a young *Lawyer*, or *brisk Gentleman* at the *Cushion*, and tells us he is

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Lex loquens, and we must let him speak, and never tell him of *Book Cases*, or *Statutes* either ; If we will not believe what he saith to be Law, we must yet suffer what he Decrees for Law ; we know the Doctrine of the *Church of England* in the 39. Articles : But this is but *Ecclesia Muta*, how many have we that will tell us, We are *Ecclesia Loquens*, the Living *Church of England*, and we tell you ; that a'though you may not terminate your Worship in an Image, yet you may Bow down and Worship the true God *before an Image*. That *d. parted Saints* know our *States* here upon the Earth, and are praying to God for us, and why then may we not pray to them ? That is, intreat them to speak to God on our behalf. That it is true, no Man can absolve another from the Guilt of Sin but God, *authoritate propria*, by his own authority ; but any Priest may do it *authoritate sibi commissâ*, by a Commission from God, and that more than *declaratively*, (for that indeed is nothing at all) and if so, he said true concerning Confession in the Ear of the Priest, who said *malè aboletur*, that it was ill abolished. The *Ecclesia Muta* indeed owns neither *Transubstantiation*, nor *Consubstantiation* : In her Articles she denies the first, in her *Declaration* (annexed now to our *Common Prayers*) she saith the first is an *Idolatry* to be abhorred ; and as to the latter she saith, The *Natural Body and Blood of our Saviour is not here, but in Heaven, it being against the truth of Christs Natural Body to be at one time in more places than one*. But have we had none that have said *it is really there*, and have endeavoured to make the World believe, This was the *Doctrine of the Ancient*, and always hath been the *Doctrine of our Church* ? Our *Ecclesia Muta* indeed allows no *Prayer in an unknown Tongue*, and why ? But because the People cannot then understand, but have we none that

that pleadeth, that even our *Conformable Congregations* are but *Conventicles*, because the Minister readeth not the *Communion Service at the Altar*, where in multitudes of *Congregations* the People cannot hear a Line from him? Our *Ecclesia Muta* indeed will not allow the People to be *Robbed of the Cup* in the Lords Supper; but have we none will tell us, that *whole Christ* is under *either Element*, and upon what other foundation doth that *Sacrilegious Romish Practice* stand? Our *Ecclesia Muta* indeed declares against *Works of Super-erogation*, but have we none who have so interpreted the Ten Commandments, that he who will ever be Saved, must do a great many such?

To sum up the rest shortly, do not Members of our *Ecclesia Loquens* tell us, that *Original Sin* is rather our misfortune than our Guilt? That *Concupiscence* is no Sin. That Man hath a power in his own Will to chuse, and do what is spiritually good. That we are not accounted righteous before God, only for the merits of Christ. That we are not justified by Faith alone. That good works must go before Justification, and are not the fruits of Faith, but Faith it self. That there is no eternal Predestination of Persons unto Life, and the means tending thereunto. We spare any names in these Cases, and are very far from thinking that there are not multitudes of Holy and Learned Men in our *Ecclesia Loquens*, that in these things are of another mind.

But if any be otherwise, we hope that *Worthy Person* who wrote this Book, will neither excuse them from *Symbolizing* with the *Church of Rome*, even in *Doctrines of highest moment*, nor yet condemn *Dissenters* for *Separation* from them, or their Assemblies, because they do it as to keep a *Communion* with the *Apostolical Church*, so also with the *Ecclesia Muta Anglicana*, and Gal. 1.7,8.
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it is impossible they should in these things have a Communion, both with the *silent*, and with this part of the *speaking Church of England*.

In requital of this piece of Charity, I dare undertake, that all the valuable Persons in *Presbyterian*, or *Independent Congregations* shall give any reasonable assurance to those who question it. That they are not in Heart divided from a *single Person* in the *Church of England*, who believeth and speaketh in matters concerning *Doctrine*, as our *Church* doth in her *Articles*; so far are they from accusing her in their thoughts of *Symbolizing* in them with the *Church of Rome*. And do heartily wish that their consent in them might make them *Articles*, what others speak them, *Instrumentum Pacis*, in a better sense than they understand that term. Were no other *Assent* and *Consent* required, how soon should all the good and sober Divines, and Christians of *England* be agreed, as it becomes the same Mothers Children? But as it was never judged a sufficient clearing of the *Church of Rome*, from the Guilt of those *Tenets*, about the lawfulness of Excommunicating, Deposing, and Murdering of Princes, &c. for them to tell us, *That these are no Doctrines of their Church*, because never Decreed by any General Councils: So if any *Doctrines* of Popery be Preached and Published by any Persons in any Church, and those Persons suffered and app'auded in it, I do not think it a sufficient acquittal for that Church to say, there are no such things in her *Articles*. *Loquere ut te videam*, It is the *speaking Church* must go for the Church, as well as the *speaking Law* must go for Law, as to *inferiours practices*, if they have no mind to smart for the defence of a *Chimæra*: But there is Sir, enough of this said, It is with all thankfulness to God acknowledged;
1. That the *Articles of the Church of England* are very
far

far from *Symbolizing with the Church of Rome*. 2. That Hundreds of the *speaking Church* are (as we believe) as far from it as the Articles. 3. That in this thing a Separation from the *silent*, as well as this part of the *speaking Church* must needs be highly sinful : Though we think that if any teach otherwise, our Separation from them can be no Separation from the *Church of England*, because their so teaching declares them to be no part of it.

But Sir, our *excellent Author* will not (nor indeed doth he) say that , because the *Church of England* in *Doctrine* doth not *Symbolize with the Church of Rome* ; therefore she *Symbolizeth* with her in nothing, he saith indeed the contrary. We do most heartily agree with this excellent Person, that it is our *Indispensable Duty* to agree not only with *Papists*, but with *Turks*, in things either in their own nature good, or made so by a *Divine Precept*. We do also as heartily believe that our *Reverend Fathers and Brethren*, that it is an *inexcusable Sin* to agree with her, in any thing which is evil in its own Nature, or made so by a *Divine Prohibition*. So that (as he rightly saith) the Questions betwixt us can only be concerning things in their own Nature indifferent. I will yet crave leave to narrow it a little more. It is only concerning things to be used in the *Worship of God*, which the parties using them confess to be indifferent, that is, to have been so before they were used by *Idolaters*.

Our excellent Author (Sir) tells us, p. 24. he hath often wondered how this should be a question; seeing whatsoever is of an indifferent Nature, as it is not commanded, so it is not forbidden, and where there is no Law, there is no transgression. How this slipt the Pen, Sir, of so excellent a Person, I cannot tell; for it is an obvious begging of the Question: Which is this;

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Whether a thing in its own Nature indifferent, be still indifferent as to Christians use in God's Worship, when it hath been once used in Idolatrous Services. If the use of it be neither naturally necessary to the Worship of God, as it is an humane Act; nor suitable to the ends of it, nor such without which it cannot in common Judgment be decently performed.

From whence these things will follow, as things out of controversy betwixt us

1. *That things which God hath commanded us the use of in his Worship, may, and must be used, though Idolaters do the same. The Jews did not leave Sacrificing, because Idolaters also offered Sacrifices.*
2. *That time, and place, must be used in God's Worship, and so also some gestures, though Idolaters have used them, because no humane action can be done without them.*
3. *That things of meer conveniency for a Religious Action, for the service of the ends of it, may be used, though Idolaters have used the like, so as none scruples the use of Churches to meet in, of places higher than the rest, for Speakers to speak from, of Seats to sit in or upon, of Hassocks and Matts to kneel upon, &c.*
4. *That things obviously decent in the Judgment of all may be used; We must not come to the Worship of God Naked, because Idolaters come Clothed; nor must our Women come with their Hair dishevelled, &c. because Popish Women come with their Quoifs and Hoods on. The Question is about no such things as these, but such only as are neither necessary by any Divine Precept, nor Naturally, nor Morally upon any of these accounts.*

I must confess, Sir, I do think that *Zanchy's* Rule is at least *safest*, (and you know Sir, *In dubiis animæ, tutior pars est eligenda*, in matters of Sin, the safest part is always to be preferred) there is no playing for a Wise Man about the *Hole of the Asp*, or *Den of the Cockatrice*.

That in matters of Worship, if the things used by Idolaters be necessary; we must separate the abuse, and retain the use: But in things not so, both the abuse and the use also ought to be abolished.

And the very reason for this is, because there is no necessity of retaining such usages. I cannot understand what else is the meaning of the Apostle in that his Application of the words found, *Psal. 24. 1. In 1 Cor. 11. 28. But if any Man say unto you, this is offered in Sacrifice unto Idols, Eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for Conscience sake; for the Earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof.* Those last words, as well as the former, are brought in as an Argument why they should not Eat meat once Offered to Idols: *For the Earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof.* That is, you shall not need starve, though you do not Eat that Meat, there is other Meat enough for you to Eat. There is a fulness upon the Earth, God hath abundantly provided for you. You know that Idolatry (like Whoredom to which it is often compared) is the highest Sin in its kind, that Idols are the greatest Abominations. What need you Eat the Meat hath been set before them, as if an Husband could find no Dish from his Wife, but what comes off from the Table of a Whore.

I must profess to you (Sir) that when I consider under what terms of Divine Abhorrence and Detestation,

God every where mentioneth *Idolatry* in Holy Writ, and the dreadful punishments threatned, and inflicted upon his dearest people for it. I cannot possibly get leave of my self to be of the mind of this excellent *Author*, that the Texts, *Lev. 18. 2. Deut. 14. 1. Lev. 19. 8.* are meerly to be understood of things in themselves *Evil*. For though it is reasonable to limit some of them to *Religious Observances*, otherwise we must indeed go out of the World: And the following part of the Chap. *Levit. 18.* gives some colour to interpret that place of things morally *Evil*; yet why are they forbidden under the notion of things done *after the doings of the Egyptians* and the *Canaanites*? Nor in *Deut. 14. 1. Levit. 19. 8.* capable of such a sense. But because our excellent *Author* tells us he can find no other Texts that *make more, if so much, for this purpose*, I shall desire you Sir, but to consider *Hosea 2. 16, 17. v. 17. I will take the names of Baalim out of her mouth*, and lest any should tell you that the Name of *Baalim* is no more than *Baalim*; and the sense no more than I will destroy *Idolatry*, the exposition stands very near it, *v. 16. Thou shalt call me Ishi, and shalt call me no more Baali. Baali* was a very good name, if we consider in it self, what doth it signify more than *My Lord*? *Adonai* is of the same significance, by which name it was never unlawful to call God, either under the Old or New *Testament*, but because the Idol was called *Baali*, God abhorred it, though he allowed himself to be called by another name of the same signification, nor will I believe the *Reverend Author* himself owns that it was lawful for the *Jews* to apply themselves to God under the name of *Baali*.

I can as little agree with the excellent *Author*, in the reason that he Assigns of God's so strict Prohibition to the *Jews* of all *Idolatrous usages*, because of the proneness

of the Jews to Idolatry, to which he thinks People are now so prone. That the Jews were prone to Idolatry, I easily grant, but that People now are more devoutly inclined, I very much doubt; I am sure they had much more reason then, than now to be averse to it, having more miraculous operations, and extraordinary appearances of God to them than we can now pretend, and I am sure the hearts of all are by nature now as bad as then. If we have a greater *Antipathy* to Popery, I fear the *Irish Rebellion*, and the *Throats* of so many Thousands then cut, and the *Fire of London*, and other places have more contributed to it, than peoples natural inclinations to true Worship, or aversions from Idolatry. I do not understand the reason why the same distance should not be kept betwixt Protestants and Papists, as between the Jews and the Egyptians, when we have *Fisher Bishop of Rochester*, and *Costerus* as great as he, confessing, *That if the Bread in the Lords Supper, be not upon the Priests Consecration Transubstantiated into the Body of Christ, they are as great Idolaters as ever were in the World*; than which nothing can be more truly spoke. Nay, I believe those that Worship the *Sun, Moon and Stars*, are far more excusable than the Papists who act more contrary to their Senses.

The Worthy Author comes to take notice of some who have limited the unlawfulness of Symbolizing with Idolaters, to things that have been notoriously abused in Idolatrous and gross superstitious Services. In such instances indeed the Argument holds a *Majori*, but I cannot see any reason, why any things (not falling under the Qualifications before mentioned) so used in Divine Worship by Idolaters, should be so retained, and should not be concluded to be prohibited; indeed *Isaiah 39. 22.* and *Dent. 7. 25, 26.* seem not to conclude it strictly (if any

P. 30.

any will be contentious.) But I do not think *Rev. 2. 14.* to which I shall add *1 Cor. 10. 28.* so easily wiped off, though the Author thinks the first impertinent; Because he saith, *The Eating of things offered to Idols, is nothing better than joyning and complying with Idolaters.* So indeed the Apostle determineth, *v. 20, 21.* But how I pray otherwise then *Interpretatively*? The *Idol* before which that Meat had been set, was neither to the Christians, the *Objectum quod*, or term of their Worship; nor the *Objectum per quod*, the *medium* by which they Worshiped God, nor *Objectum motivum*, what excited their Worship; nor indeed were the Christians when they did Eat in any Act of Worship, doing ought but feasting with their Neighbours, whiles one side of the *Table* (*viz. the Pagan side*) acted Religiously, feasting upon their Sacrifice; the *Christian side* only *civilly*, but because the *Meat* had been upon the *Table of Devils*: The Apostle determines that in their feasts of this nature they had a *Communion with Devils*. It is hard to make them *Idolaters* in any other sense than *Tertullian* makes the *Image makers* working upon their Trade in making Idols, or those that amongst Christians Celebrated the Holy Days, by adorning their Temples with *Holly*, *Joy*, or *Bays*, as the *Pagans* did, to be *Idolaters*: Things innocent enough if *Idolaters* had not set them their Copy.

P. 31.

From what hath been said Sir, you will easily understand that our Brethren are consistent enough to themselves in making use of *Churches*, *Fonts* or *Bells*, though they cannot allow *peculiar Habits*, and *Crosses*, and all *Gestures*, and that they need not as yet give up their Cause.

P. 33.

Our excellent Author cannot but know that *Cake*, *P. Martyr*, *Zanchy*, and others of our famous first Reformers

men have said much more against the retaining unnecessary things abused to *Idolatry*, than he can bring to testify any of their approbation of them, and that by the Spirit of *Prophecy* they have lamented the probable future state of those Churches, that had retained any *Worm Eggs* belonging to those old Birds, what Religion come to in the *Saxon*, and divers other *Lutheran* Churches, we need not tell so great a Person, what is in coming amongst us time will shew.

For what our excellent Author saith, with reference P. 34.
to *Hezekiah's* destroying the *Brazen Serpent*, 2 *Kings* 18. 4. Set up by Gods command, *Num.* 29. 9. It is very true: 1. That it was made an *Idol*; but no more than the *Cross*, or the *Picture* of the *Virgin Mary* is at this day made by the *Papists*. 2. It was at that time actually used as an *Idol*. So is the *Cross* by the *Papists*. 3. The *Papists* were generally lapsed into this *Idolatry*; so are the *Papists* universally. 4. There was little hope of reclaiming them any other way. There is every whit as little hope of reclaiming *Papists* from their *Idolatry* of the *Cross*. 5. It was a probable temptation to them to *Idolatry*: May not the like be said of what *Dissenters* had against? 6. If (he saith) *Hezekiah* had let it stand private persons might have made use of it, to put them in mind of the wonderful *Mercy* of God expressed by it to their *Forefathers*.

The Question at present under our debate is, whether *Hezekiah* might lawfully have let it stand, and removed it into the *Temple*, whether his setting up by the *Ark*, the *Mercy Seat*, would have purged it? Had he done it, there is no question but private persons might have made a lawful use of it, but that could have been none at all in *Divine Worship*; and if it had stood at *Dan* or *Bethel*, and multitudes there Worshipped it, I doubt not

not but the honest ~~Jews~~ might have *separated* and gone over to the *Temple* at *Jerusalem* without the least Sin. Though the Priests were a Snare upon Mizpeth, and a Net spread upon Tabor to hinder it, *Hos. 5. 1.* Surely Sir, our Reverend Author did not himself Correct his Sheets, cannot think, else he should have let that passage pass his judicious Eye which I find p. 36. in these words.

P. 36.

And much more, might they have lawfully continued the Communion of the Church, so long as there was no constraint laid upon them, to joyn with them in their Idolatry.

May then a consciencious Christian continue in the Communion of an Idolatrous Society? (Church I cannot properly call it:) that he may dwell in a City of Idolaters I doubt not, but may he be in the Church Communion of the People of that City, provided he may be himself excused from bowing the Knee to Baal? This I can never believe till some can prove to me, that a Wife may lawfully contrary to the command of her Husband stay in a Family of Whoremongers, provided that she be not compelled to play the Whore. Hath Christ no Communion with Idols? Did not John hear a voice from Heaven, saying, Come out of her my People. If it be not to be understood of a coming out from the Communion of an Idolatrous Society, I would be glad to know what meaneth.

P. 37.

Our Reverend Author comes to his Third Head, which he stateth thus :

That the Agreement of the Church of England, and the Church of Rome is in no wise such, as will make the Communion with the Church of England unlawful.

If this excellent person had pleased to have said *All Communion*, I had fully concurred with him, believing that the Church of *England* cannot be justly charged with *Idolatry*, and that some *Communion* may, and ought to be held with any Church that is not so charged; but as he hath laid it, I cannot agree it. I am sure Christ had *Communion* with the *Jewish Church*, and I believe he had so in all acts of *Worship* of his *Fathers Institution*; and I am as sure he had no *Communion* with them in the *Traditional part of their Worship*, as I am sure he would not himself practise, what he condemned so severely in those that practised it. There may be a wide distance betwixt two Churches, and yet both of them so faulty, that a conscientious Christian may not be able with a safe Conscience in all things to have *Communion* with either of them.

Our Author comes to consider the particulars, in which he confesseth that the Church of *England* *Symbolizeth with the Church of Rome*, but affirms that they are no just grounds for a *Separation* from it. These he reduceth to four heads.

1. *The Government of our Church by Bishops.*
2. *Our Churches prescribing a Liturgy, or set Forms of Prayer.*
3. *A Liturgy so contrived as ours is.*
4. *Certain Rites of our Church:* Particularly he mentions the *Surplice*, the *Cross in Baptisme*, *Kneeling at the Communion*, the *Ring in Marriage*, the *Observation of certain Holy days*.

Before he speaks to these he premiseth,

1. *That he takes it for granted, that all these things are in their own nature indifferent.*
2. *That there is no expresse positive Law of God against any of these things, only consequences drawn*

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from Divine Laws, or some circumstances attending them.

3. That he is concerned only to vindicate them from being unlawful, upon the account only of this one circumstance, viz. Our Symbolizing with the Church of Rome in them.

There being few things to be named unlawful in the first sense, that is, having a *vitiousness* and *immorality* in them considered abstractly from the consideration of the Divine Will as to them, it were a very high charge for any to lay upon these four things, to say that in that sense they were unlawful, nor indeed can any thing properly be call'd unlawful, against which there is no positive Divine Law. But a contrariety to some *express positive Divine Law* is not to be expected to render every thing unlawful that indeed is so. A thing so concluded by direct, *first*, and *just* consequence from the Letter of Holy Writ, or in respect of any sinful *circumstance* attending, is (I think) by all Divines determined unlawful, though not against the *spirit* or letter of Holy Writ. But our *Author* tells us his Province is only to prove they are *not unlawful*, because of the *Symbolizing in them with the Church of Rome*. Indeed this is Sir a narrow point.

P. 39.

We have already granted that no *necessary thing* can be thus made *unlawful*: If therefore (as he saith) Government by such *Bishops* as ours are, be an *Apostolical Institution*, it is impossible it should be unlawful upon this *one account*. Whatsoever therefore this excellent Person hath said upon this point, *p. 39.* is clearly nothing to the Question, being what neither party judge *indifferent*, nor any piece of Gods's Worship: Only it troubles me to read so worthy a Person, saying, *I know not how our Brethren will defend the Apostolical Institution*

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tion of the Lords day, while that they contend that this of Episcopacy cannot be concluded from the uninterrupted Tradition of the Catholic Church. Certainly for the Apostolical practice in the Observation of the Lords day, we have the infallible Evidence of Holy Scripture, Acts 20. 1 Cor. 16. Whereas for the other we have but few, and those very uncertain Records for the First Two hundred years; nor of any claiming a sole power in Ordination, or Jurisdiction for several Hundreds of years more, Dissenters do allow Overseers of the Church (the term ἐπισκοπος signifies no more) to be indeed an Apostolical Institution, if that be all that is pleaded for.

The like might be said of *Liturgies*, or set Forms of Prayer, which cannot be indifferent, if indeed (as the worthy Person saith) they be *highly expedient* to be universally imposed, yea *necessary*, or as others think, they be not lawful so to be imposed. For the *Antiquity* of them this excellent Person knows it is denied, but that debate he tells us will be the business of a *New Discourse*, for which we shall patiently wait.

P. 40.

For the Method and Order of a *Liturgy*, this or that Form, or thus and thus methodized, (supposing the lawfulness of one universally imposed) that may claim to some indifference, yet not such, but that alone, if not contrived in subserviency to the three general Rules, of *Edification*, the *Glory of God*, and not giving offence to any of the Churches of Christ, may make it unlawful, as all Divines will readily acknowledge.

P. 41.

I must profess (Sir) I never thought it lawful for any *Laick* wholly to separate from the Church of England, because of our *Liturgy*, nor did my self ever so separate. But there is a new Generation started up, that I see hath not only made me a *Separatist*, but all *Conformable Ministers*, if they do not every time read the

Second Service at the Altar, &c. If they must needs be made Separatists, that are not satisfied to joyn in every Punctilio, or Rite, or Phrase, &c. I am afraid in a short time we shall be put to find *Samnium in Samnio*, and come to his mind who said there were of all the *Clergy* but Four *true Sons of our Church*, (of which he counted himself for one.) But Sir, though I have this Latitude of Practice, yet I have also another Latitude of Charity for those, who in this thing cannot fit their Foot by my Last. I cannot judge it reasonable that for that alone, their *Feet should be made fast in the Stocks, and the Irons enter into their Souls*, whiles also their Bread is taken from them which they and their Families should eat, and the Beds on which they should lye down: Because I would not that a *Popish Inquisitor* should do the same to me, and I know our Saviours Precept, which is also a Law of Nature, *Matth. 7. 12.*

P. 42, 43. This excellent Person hath spied Four little Thorns in some Dissenters flesh, which he hath very charitably endeavoured to pick out; I will candidly inquire if no bit of them remain which may cause pain, and hinder healing.

The First is the *shortness of some Prayers, rather fitted for some sudden Ejaculations, than stated Solemn Prayer in publick Worship*. Now I must confess why I may not say *Amen* to a *Lord have Mercy upon me* (though no more be said) I cannot tell. But if some Dissenters think that throughout the Scripture (which is undoubtedly the best place to find patterns of Prayer in) there is nothing like this to be found, either in the Prayers of *Solomon, David, Jehosaphat, Ezra, Daniel*; or any others, and be a little stumbled at it, I cannot condemn them. My *Indifferent Spectacles* will not fit every Mans Eyes, nor have

have I any reason to put any Mans Eyes out upon that account. But I never met with any, who upon this account charged our *Forms* as *unlawful*, if any have indecently called them *short cuts*, and *shreds of Prayers*; I cannot account for their Indiscretions: *Grave* things ought to be *gravely* spoken of.

All the Peoples Obligation to, or Actual bearing a part with the Minister in reading the *Psalms* or *Hymns*, or *Respondents* I have indeed often heard faulted, but never affirmed to be unlawful, though some think it highly *inconvenient*. 1. As not futing the Gravity and Solemnity of the Action. 2. In regard many of those forward in reading, read false oft-times. 3. Many more Children and Girdles understand not what they do. 4. Those that cannot *Read* are not Edified in a confused noise, not being able to understand what is *Read*. 5. Many lewd and prophane Persons, thus are made to bear a share in the *Ministerial* part of the *publick* *Worship*, whom the Primitive Church would have kept at the *Church Doors*, and the Jews would have allowed only to come into the *Court of the Gentiles*. 6. There is no such Practice in the *Churches of God* in *New England*, *Scotland*, *France*, *Holland*, &c. whether these things will not balance the five things spoken by the *Reverend* Mr. *Baxter* for it, I shall, Sir, leave to your thoughts, supposing this *excellent* *Authour* to have not only truly, but perfectly recited all by him spoken in the place noted, for I have not his Book by me.

The Third instance he gives, is the taking *some of* the *Collects* out of the *Roman Missal*, (I wish he had told how many, for I have heard they are two thirds.) To this he answereth, *They are good or bad, if bad, they ought not be used if they were not there. — If good, this simplifying cannot make them bad. — Our Brethren will allow*

P. 43.

P. 43.

allow of reading the same Scriptures they do, and why they should they disallow of the using what perfectly agreeth with Scripture because they use it. If by good he meaneth necessary, his division is imperfect, for some things are in that sense neither Good nor Bad, but Indifferent, and made good or bad according to circumstances. I know that *Dissenters* will say, that the *Forms of Prayer* spoken of are of that Nature Not necessary, because not commanded by God in his Worship. Not *sinful in themselves*, because not forbidden, not having any false propositions in them. But they conceive the former use of them in an Idolatrous Service, makes them come under the second notion; I am not wholly of that mind, but that is the τὸ ὑπερβουλον.

I hear them sometimes saying, The Meat once offered in Sacrifice to Idols, was in it self neither Good nor Bad. Not necessary, they might eat other meat, and live that alone. Not *sinful* or unclean upon any other account than that it had been once offered to an Idol. No, not simply on that account, for if they happened to buy it at the *Shambles*, or in a *Cooks-shop*, they might lawfully eat it, asking no question for Conscience sake, 1 Cor. 10. 25. if they met with it at another Table, and did not know it had been so offered they might eat, v. 27. But if they knew it had been so offered, if any told it them, eat not (saith the Apostle, v. 28.) for his sake that sheweth it; that is, for fear of scandalizing thy Brother, and for Conscience sake, to maintain in thy self a good Conscience toward God. And why? Because thou art at liberty, thou hast other meat enough to eat, for the Earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof. Now (say our poor afflicted Brethren) what necessity is there more of using such or such Phrases, or compositions of words than there was of eating that meat? Are we not able to make others

where? Why should not we think God saith to us, eat not, as well as for *their* sake who tell us of it and will be grieved, as for *the keeping of our own Consciences clean* towards God? I must own that for this very reason, I do not think any such *Compositions* fit to be chosen. I only differ from my *Brethren*, that I think, that they being made *unlawful only by circumstances*: A *consequence of other circumstances* may cure them of unlawfulness, as I do not doubt but the Christians at *Corinth* might have eaten even of those meats, if they could not otherwise have been preserved from being starved. A *Collision of Precepts* in such cases goeth a great way, and if both cannot, that of most weight must be obeyed. It is a mighty error that some are in on both sides, either to think, *That all which is not to be chosen, is not lawful*, or that *that which under some circumstances is not allowable, continues so under all others*. I should not chuse to call the *Pope, His Holiness* here in *England*, but if I were at *Rome*, and must do it or be thrown into the *Inquisition*, I should not much scruple it I think. I said before, I am not of these *Brethrens* Opinion, who upon this Argument forbear to hear the *Common Prayer*, but I pity them, and wish I had a better answer to their Argument than I have.

The last thing our excellent *Author* instanceth in as alledged for a justifiable cause of Separation, is the appointing *Lessons out of the Apocryphal Books*. I never heard this urged as a *solely sufficient cause*, and am far from thinking it is, I must confess it is a little *Regret* to some people, to hear the *Stories of Tobit, and Bell and the Dragon* read to people coming not to hear *Romances*, nor *humane Writings*, but the Word of God, I think some parts of the *Apocrypha* are appointed to be read on *Sundays*, but whether it be so or no, *Holy days*

days are the same with *Sabbath days*, to those who judge there is nothing but *Tradition* for either; and being read in a *Complex Act of Worship*, they must be a *part of Worship* when ever they are read (they juttle out *reading the Scripture* which is a part of *Worship*.) I only name this, being satisfied my self that a *Complex Act of Worship* may lawfully enough be interrupted, with reading a *Proclamation*, or *Declaration*, or *Brief*, or *Publishing the Banes of Matrimony*, though I think it were better otherwise. If all cannot judge by my reason, yet methinks they should not for it be forced out of their Wits, nor made to do what they cannot (as well as I) apprehend lawful. Certainly if the wise God had ever intended his people such a thing, he would have made them more equal measures of apprehensions; but declaring his Will for greater measures of charity, than the Passions of men will suffer them to use, it is no wonder that he did no farther provide for mens relief against the effects of others Passions.

P. 45. Our Reverend Author (Sir) cometh next to consider the *Dissenters Plea for Separation*, from the *Symbolizing in some Rites, and Ceremonies with the Church of Rome*. As to which, he observeth in the general,

1. That our Ceremonies are not the hundredth part of those used by them; That is very true, for in their Worship, it is almost as hard to find an *Institution of Christ* as to find a Needle in a Bottle of Hay, according to our usual Proverb. But we may as well Symbolize in thirty as in three.

2. Second'y he saith, our Church imposeth them not as *things of Religion or necessity*, or *meritorious Services*. If I remember right Sir, the *Augustane Confession* thus excuseth the *Lutheran Churches* for their retaining more

than we do; but I could never understand any thing of it except the *last branch*. Are not those Rites imposed as *necessary* which the Minister must use, or not *Preach*, or *Baptize*, or *Administer* the *Lords Supper*, and without which People must not *Obey Christ* in *eating and drinking* at his Holy Table? Are not those things made part of *Religion*, without the use of which Men must not be Religious? For the particular *Ceremonies* he instanceth in, they are but Three: The *Surplice*, the *Cross* in *Baptisme*, and *Kneeling* in the Act of *Receiving the Supper*. From whence I observe, That *coming up to the Rails*, *Receiving the Sacrament*, *Bowing at the Name of Jesus*, &c. are things left at liberty.

For the *Surplice*, he rightly observeth (Sir) that all are not obliged to wear it, nor am I scandalized at the sight of it, nor am I sure they use a Garment of the same Form in the *Church of Rome*, though they use some of the same colour, so as I doubt whether in that we do *Symbolize* with the *Church of Rome* or no, any further than we appoint a Garment to be used in an *Act of Worship*, which we will not suffer to be worn elsewhere, so that it is neither merely for *Necessity*, nor *natural Decency*, nor *Ornament*, nor for *distinction*, (for then why should not all Ministers wear it at other times?) which are all the Ends of Garments I know. For what use is it then? if wholly useless, why is it made necessary to him that MinistrETH in Worship? May not such thoughts as these arise in weaker Christians, or jealousies of some homage by it intended unto God? But it not falling strictly under the Question in debate, (which is about *Symbolizing* in usage with an Idolatrous Church) I shall pass it over, believing that none keep from Church upon that single account.

P. 46

P. 46, 47. For the *Cross in Baptisme*, I see no reason for a total Separation from the *Church of England*, upon that account; it is enough if he gets his Child privately *Baptized* without it, and being so *Baptized*, forbears to bring it afterward to be *Baptized* again by it. It is also very true, that we make no such use of it as the *Papists*: But the Question is, whether we do not by it *Symbolize* with them, in adding to the *Divine Institution unnecessarily*, or attributing to the *Sign of the Cross* more than is truly due to it as the *Papists* do: To expound *Dedicated* by *Declared*, is as *Catachrestical* a use of the word. Neither can any private *Doctor* (though greater than *Dr. Burges*) arrogate any authority to give the sense of Terms used in *Laws*; what some particular parts of the *Primitive Church* might do we cannot tell, nor are we to live by their Faith; But I have said enough, granting this no sufficient cause of a total Separation.

P. 48. For *Kneeling in the Act of Receiving the Lords Supper*, Sir, I must needs say, that the *Declaration* added to our *Common Prayer-Book*, hath very much abated the ill appearance it before had. But yet I think something more must be said before the *lawfulness* be cleared to every one, who desires to live up to the *Divine Rule*.

That excellent *Declaration* indeed freeth it from any *Adoration* of a *Creature*, upon a supposition that it is strangely *Metamorphosed* into the *Creator* (which is the *Papish Error*) it also freeth it from the *Nonsense* of *Worshipping* a *Body* which is not there; or if it be, is *No Body*: But admit a *Christian* to doubt, *Whether it be lawful for him to perform an Act of external Adoration to the true God, upon the view of a Creature exposed to his View, on purpose to excite that Adoration*; and in justification of his doubt of the *lawfulness* of it to quote

Luke

*Luke 4. 7. compared with Matth. 4. 9. Luke hath προσκυνήσεις ἐνώπιόν μου, which is, if thou shalt Worship before me. Mathew saith, ἐάν προσκυνήσεις μοι, If thou shalt Worship me; from whence he may say appears, That it is the same thing to Worship a Creature, and the true God before a Creature, calling to us for that homage. Is this taken away by the Declaration? Indeed the Declaration saith, it is well meant for a signification of our humble, and grateful acknowledgment of the benefits of Christ therein given to all worthy receivers, which it may be satisfieth me, abstracting my thoughts from the Bread while I am upon my Knees. But if all cannot be so satisfied, shall they therefore be ruined for their doubt in this thing? Which is no such plain case as those predicate it, who do not understand where the difficulty lies: If it had, so Learned Men as Mr. Calderwood in his *Altare Damasc.* and the Author of the *English Ceremonies*, and very many *Scottish Divines* (never denied the repute of Learned Men by any, who themselves had any Learning) could not have been so positive, and Argumentative in it as they are. Our Saviours saying nothing of the Posture, is nothing to the purpose when the question is about a Posture of Adoration only: Nor doth it prove what our Reverend Author saith, That Christ hath left the Gesture to the Churches determination. Our Saviour bid his Disciples Baptize, but saith nothing of Water, nor from what Fountain or River hath he therefore left it to the Churches determination; That Ministers shall Baptize only with Rose water, or Water fetched from the River, &c. Sir, I have better thoughts for the excellent Author then to think he will assert such a thing, yet the reason would be the same.*

I do not think what our Author mentions, p. 50. of the Ring in Marriage worth speaking to. Dissenters be-

P. 50, 51.

lieve Marriage a Civil Action, to which *Prayer* and *Exhortation* is only added, as *Prayers* and a *Sermon* is sometime applied to a *Sessions* or *Affizes*. They generally believe the *Ring* a civil pledge, or usage instead of which the state may, when it will, appoint any other; nor, I believe, did any Dissenter ever Separate from the *Church* on this account, or from the generality of Mankind in refusing to Marry because of this usage: Therefore how it comes into our debate I cannot tell.

P. 52, 53, &c. For *Holy days* (which is our excellent Authors last instance) Sir, all Dissenters I ever met with have thought,

1. That it is Gods Prerogative alone to make a *Day Holy*, i. e. such as it shall be sinful for any to labour in.

2. That God's Revelation of his Will for Solemn Praises upon the receipts of Signal Mercies; or Solemn Prayers in times of great distress, justifieth Magistrates or Churches in setting apart in such cases, Days for Praise and Prayers.

3. That all such days ought to be entirely spent in Religious Exercises.

4. That to spend an hour of such a Day in Prayer, and all the rest of it in Idleness, Drinking, Revelling, Gaming, &c. is not to keep an *Holy*, but a Licentious Day.

5. That there is no need of keeping any such Days in Commemoration of the *Birth*, *Death*, *Resurrection*, or *Ascension of Christ*; because God hath appointed fifty two, every year for that very purpose.

6. That to keep a day *Holy* to any Saint, is to make an *Idol* of that Saint.

7. That to keep a Day of Thanksgiving to God for the mercy shewed us, in blessing the World with such

Saint, is what God hath no where prescribed, what neither the Jews, nor Christians in the first times ever did.

8. But if devout Persons will set apart Days to give God thanks for any *signal mercies*, or to put up Prayers for any people in distress, provided they do not mock God, in giving him an Holy Hour instead of an Holy Day, and spending the rest of the Day in Idleness, Gaming, Drinking, &c. Dissenters will never blame or condemn them for it.

9. Finally, Dissenters will never separate from the Church of England, for the true keeping of a Day Holy to God, and do generally keep more so than their Neighbours otherwise minded; but they will separate from the looseness, and commonly practised Profanation of it, or from the keeping Days to the Honour of Saints, or such as were only so in the Popes Kalendar, as St. George, &c. None are more Religious to the keeping Days of Publick Fasts and Thanksgivings than they are. If they do not keep them with Conformable Ministers, the reason is not because they will not keep them Holy, but because they will keep them more Solemnly and strictly; whatever therefore is, this is not the true cause of any persons Separation, at least of Separation in the Ordinary Acts of Communion.

And now how happy should we not only think ourselves, but indeed be, would our Brethren (Sir) but leave disputing how far it is lawful for the Spouse of Christ to have Communion with the Great Whore, and only argue how far we come short of Symbolizing with the First and best Gospel Churches, of which we have Records in Holy Writ? In order to which we would have our Brethren understand, That the Term Church is not a Law Term, but only (truly) applicable to a Body of people,

people, whom the Scripture hath first called by that name. That in one notion the Scripture calleth none so. But the whole Body of people in Heaven and Earth called out by Christ to the true Receiving, and external Profession of the Gospel. That those who have in Heart Received it, are partly in Heaven, and partly on Earth both which make up the Church invisible, one part of which is *Triumphant*, the other *Militant*. That all those who live on the Earth, and have received Christ in Profession, whether *seriously* or *hypocritically* make up the *Church Catholick visible*, which living in several Nations that part of them that lives in this or that Nation, is called the *National Church* of such a Nation; but neither the *Church* considered as *Universal*, or as *National* is capable of any Government, but that of the *Spirit of Christ* ruling in the *Hearts of Believers*, and of *Princes* to whom they ought to be subject in things lawful who may exercise their Power either by *themselves*, or by such *Commissioners* as they please, Dignified by what *Titles* they think fit. That Governing Churches must have proper Officers, which cannot be, unless elected by the Governed, who (by chusing *Representatives* sit in *Political Assemblies*) could never part with the Right in chusing Officers, for the conduct of their *Sovereignty for themselves*, because they could be presumed to do such a thing, being much less then in giving them Power to determine what Trades they should use, or what Tradesmen they should make use of for their Families, &c. much less could they give away the Right of their Posterity in the case; the Right being by the Will of God *Personal*, not *Relative*: That there can be no such *Election* for the *Catholick Church*, nor for any *National Church*. (All Christians in the World, nor all Christians in any Nation having never yet met together

do any Act of that Nature.) That so many Baptized persons as will or can so meet together and chuse Officers, with such Officers constitute a *Governing Church*. That the Officers of such Churches in a Nation meeting together, may be called a *National Church*, but have no power of censures, but only as Brethren to advise, and to judge of any Appeals, and to withdraw Communion from such whose Spirits will not be subject to the Prohibitions, (which refusers may be called *Separatists* from the *National Church*. That every Christian is bound to joyn himself to some particular Church exercising Government (according to the Law of Christ) that being voluntarily joyned, he ought to live in such a place, he ordinarily may have Communion with that Society in the Duties of God's Worship, and cannot separate from it so long as he continueth in such a place as he may joyn with it; unless, 1. He finds such errors in its Constitution, as (had they been known before to him) ought to have hindred his union with it, (in which case all know a man may lawfully, yea, and ought to separate from the Woman taken for his Wife.) 2. Or he finds that Christ is departed from that Body being turned idolatrous, in which case God always saith to People, *Lo ammi*: (Thus Divorce is lawful in case of Whoredom, but in no other case.) 3. Or except that Body will not admit him to abide in it, unless he will do something, which his Conscience tells him is sinful, or beats him out of Doors.

Separating in all these cases we say is lawful, if not necessary; for in the two first cases he ought to separate. In the last he may prudently and warily depart, he is bound at all times to depart from it, in the practices which he judgeth sinful. He is not bound always to abide with any Church, where he cannot enjoy the Ordinances

Ordinances of God, without doing what he verily believeth sinful: Other *Separation* we, Sir, judge *sinful*; This we judge no *sinful Separation*. *Separation* being a *term of Motion*, we must first agree in the *term à quo*, from which such motion must be, before we can confess our selves *Separatists*, and *Schisme* signifying a *Rent in a Body*, we must first agree the *Body* before we can determine the *Rent*. These, Sir, are our *principles*, of the fallshood of which we are ready to receive Conviction, if any can charitably effect it; but till then, thus we believe, thus we speak, accordingly we practice.

From hence we conclude: 1. That there can be no *Separation* from the *Universal visible Church*, but by *Herefie*, or departing from the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel*, or from the *Acts of Worship* performed in it.

2. That there can be no other *Separation* from any *National Church*.

3. That there can be no *sinful Separation* from a *particular Church*, with which we never had any *Union*, or ought to have had no *Union*, had we rightly understood what we now know, or if it be lapsed to *Idolatry*, or so far degenerated, that it casts us out, because we will not go with it: Or we cannot lawfully enjoy all *Ordinances* in it, according to the rule prescribed by our blessed Lord and Master.

If any have any other *Notions* of a *Church*, we know not upon what *Scriptures* they are founded, but do know that we must make our *Notion* of it agree with the *Word*, without which we had never heard of such thing as a *Church*, and it is no wonder if they call it in their *Notions* *Schismatics* and *Separatists*: Which signify nothing, but such as make a *Rent* in the *Body* the

their Fancies have Created, and make a *Motion* from a
 from which themselves have erected.

If any others either in former Ages, or in our own
 Age, have had any other apprehensions of the significan-
 ce of the Terms, *Church Schism* and *Separation*, whom
 we own to have been Holy and excellent men, till we
 see their Notions justified from *Holy Writ*, (which al-
 one can determine these things) we must crave leave
 to dissent from them, and believe that had they lived in
 our times, they would have dissented from their own
 apprehensions under a more imperfect light, as we know
Blessed Cranmer did, and testified it by his afterward dy-
 ing in Testimony of the same *Truth*, for which he (but
 a few years before) condemned the Holy Martyr *Lambert*.
 It is therefore very impertinent to tell us what
 others thought in these things, before their Eyes were
 fully Cured, and though they saw, yet it was but like
 him in the *Gospel*, who at first saw *Men like Trees*, but
 afterwards saw clearer. None discerneth so well when
 he first awakes from sleep, as when he hath been some
 time up, and hath the advantage of the Sun in the top
 of the *Meridian*. What doth it signify to tell us what
 others before us thought, when we are sure they ought
 to have judged according to what Christ and his Apostles
 judged, who were before them. Which we profess to
 be our Rule, and are ready by that *Rule* to try any part
 of our *Practise* at any *Bar of Reason*.

Do we not all own the same God, and Father? The
 same invisible Head of the Church Christ Jesus? The
 same *Holy Scriptures*, as the Body of Divine Laws? The
 same *Prince* clothed with the same Authority in the
 Church, as any good *King of Israel and Judah*, which
 was to put God's Laws in it in Execution, and what
 more we have not Learned? What do we then contend

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about?

about? All of us pretend to be on our journey to Heaven, and to be willing to take the way which God hath directed, but one saith 'tis this, another saith it is that, both agree that by one or the other way they may come thither at last; only one thinks, that if going this way, *he should suffer less, his Works shall in the great day be burnt up, and he saved as by Fire*: Another thinks this is a mistake, and he shall in that other way come thither with more ease; hath either of these reason to Cudgel his Brother into the way which he prefers. Will any say that God hath commanded Members of the Church to walk together? Are then all the Churches of God Uniform in their Rites or Forms? Or what Precept have we for a further Union betwixt the Members of a *National particular Church*, than for the *Members of the Universal Church*? Nay, is there any *National Church*, in which all the particular Churches are Uniform to a Form or a Rite? Is there any *Parochial Assembly* where all the Members are so? and are they *Schismatics* on this account, because they are not? What excuseth them? Do they not meet by themselves, and is that the matter? Surely each Parish meeteth by it self, and all good people in the same Parish would do so too, if they could meet with the rest, and hear their own Pastors: Or could be admitted to the Lord's Supper, or have their Children Baptized without doing what they verily believe sinful.

But there is no end of these reasonings; Let us first be agreed in the true Notion of a *Church* with power to Govern, and of *Ecclesiastical Laws*; We shall quickly agree other things.

Till those things be agreed, we vainly discourse other things. *Dissenters* all agree the 19th of the 39. Articles, That

“The

"The visible Church of Christ is a Congregation of
 "faithful Men, in the which the pure Word of
 "God is Preached, and the Sacraments be duly Ad-
 "ministred according to Christs order, in all those
 "things that are of necessity requisite to the same.

and that *such a Church*, as well as the *Church of Rome*
 may err, not only in their *Living* and *manner of Cere-*
monies, but also in *matters of Faith*, as did the Church
 of *Hierusalem, Antioch* and *Alexandria*: But they can-
 not agree the *twentieth*, and do not know whether it
 was of the *same date*, or made by the same persons
 that agreed the other yea or no; they agree the 21. Ar-
 ticle (understood of *Christian Protestant Princes*) they
 agree the 37. Article, they are not so well agreed as to
 the 34th. about *Traditions*: Let these two great points
 (Sir) about the *true Notion of a Governing Church* (for
 of such a one none will say the 19th. is to be understood)
 and *Ecclesiastical Laws* be first agreed, other things will
 fall in. But 'till those be agreed, we come not near
 the root of the matter, but play only with *Homonymous*
Terms, by which one man understands one thing, ano-
 ther man understands another.

Now the God of peace, which brought again from the
dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the
Sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting Cove-
nant,

Make us perfect in every good work, working in us
that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus
Christ, to whom be Glory for ever. Amen. Heb. 13.

20, 21.

F I N I S.